Coldwater Project Signs With Union

Local construction workers are close to an important victory at the new $40 million Coldwater Creek warehouse in Parkersburg.

Although the construction manager, Clayco Construction, is from Missouri, an agreement has been signed with the Carpenters and Laborers insuring local workers will be used on the job.

A number of subcontracts are still to be let, and it is not clear whether local workers will continue to get all the jobs but local trades officials are hopeful.

Sam Davis, Business Manager of Building Trades in Parkersburg said he was "...very pleased with the way things are going."

"I have to thank the local development authority for pushing the use of local contractors and workers," Davis said. "We couldn't have done this without them."

Shortly after the project was announced last Fall, Jacksonville

Crane Bill Passes; Jobs Act Pilot Project To Begin

Legislation establishing crane operator certification and a Jobs Act pilot project were among bills passed in the final days of the West Virginia Legislature.

Both pieces of legislation were supported by ACT.

The Crane Operators Certification Act sets in place minimum requirements for operators of cranes with a capacity of 10,000 pounds or more in the construction industry.

Requirements include passage of a written examination, a practical demonstration and a physician's statement certifying the operator is physically qualified to drive a commercial motor vehicle.

Operators with over 2000 hours of on-the-job experience operating a crane in the four years preceding their application will be exempted from the practical demonstration if they apply for their license prior to Jan. 1, 2000, and meet all the other requirements.

Exemptions from the certification requirement include those operating a crane as part of an agricultural or timber harvesting enterprise, employees of manufacturing and industrial companies, and persons enrolled in approved training or apprenticeship programs working under

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Illegal Aliens Are Caught

Nineteen suspected illegal aliens working on the Nitro Wal-Mart project were arrested on Monday, Feb. 23 by U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). One short week later, another six illegal aliens were arrested at the construction site of a truck stop also in Nitro.

The first group arrested were all Mexican and had been working for Hollis Roofing, a subcontractor out of Mississippi, for several months.

INS was tipped off by the ACT Foundation which had been contacted a number of times from members of the Ironworkers and Carpenters union as well as citizens complaining about the construction jobs lost to out-of-state workers. However, INS had a hard time actually catching the aliens on the site.

The extra help INS needed came from the West

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When Phil Selman, an eight year employee of Kanawha Stone Co. (KSC), was permanently laid off for his attempt to organize the employees, members from unions in the Charleston and Huntington areas came out in force to support him.

Pickets were set up at KSC's job sites in Kanawha and Wayne Counties in support of Selman.

"Selman lost his job because of his organizing effort and that's just not fair," said Donnie Huff, ACT Representative.

"We are standing together in solidarity for one of our own."

Roy Snodgrass, IUOE Local 132 Business Agent said he was "...determined to see this campaign through until the end and until Phil [Selman] gets his job back."

"I want KSC employees to know that we will stand up for them and see that their rights are protected," he added.

At the Dudley Farms site on Corridor Gin Charleston across from Southridge Center, members of Teamsters Local 175, Laborers Local 1353, Operators Local 132, and Carpenters Local 1207 have formed the picket line.

Members of Teamsters Local 505, Laborers Local 543, Carpenters Local 302 and Operators Local 132 are picketing the Tolsia Highway US Rt. 52 project in Wayne County.

These projects total several million dollars.

There had been mass picket-

CRANE CERTIFICATION BILL, JOBS ACT PILOT

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the supervision of a certified operator.

"This is a very positive step towards improving safety from the standpoint of assuring the most qualified and trained individuals are operating cranes and will help protect everyone on a work site," said Operating Engineers Local 132 Business Manager Bruce Tarpley.

Tarpley believes a lot of credit for getting the bill into law goes to the union heavy and highway contractors association, Constructor's Labor Council of West Virginia, as well as the many bill sponsors including Del. Ernie Kuhn, D-Boone; Del. Gary Tillis, D-Putnam; Del. Larry Linch, D-Harrison; Del. Tamara Petitit, D-Hancock; Sen. Oshel Craig, D-Putnam; Sen. Don Macnaughton, D-Wetzel and Sen. Jack Buckalew R-

Kanawha.

"We also appreciate the many union members, both from the crafts and other unions, who helped us get this bill passed," Tarpley said.

While the West Virginia Jobs Act of 1994, which failed to gain enough legislative support to become law, ACT was successful in getting legislation passed to create a pilot program to evaluate the impact of requiring the employment of local workers in publicly funded construction projects.

The bill as passed will require at least two Division of Highway projects and at least one School Building Authority project to employ at least 90 percent of the hourly workers from the local labor market.

The commissioner of Labor will then have one year from the beginning of the last project to evaluate the data provided by the agencies and add his analysis and evaluation of the benefit of the pilot projects in providing additional jobs for West Virginia workers.

Overall, this legislative session was a mixed bag for labor in general.

The House and Senate both refused to revisit the so-called "reforms" to workers compensation but did pass two resolutions requiring an actuarial study of the disability threshold limits imposed by the 1995 legislation.

"An actuarial study done by the Fund found the thresholds could be reduced," said West Virginia AFL-CIO President Jim Bowen.

"The ACT Foundation performed a similar study which came to the same conclusion."

"These resolutions will now require an independent study of this issue to be presented to the legislature before their next regular session in 1999."

Other legislative efforts affecting workers included:

West Virginia State Employees Union convinced legislators to change certain provisions of the state's grievance procedure.

The Communication Workers were handed a defeat on their efforts to make it easier to get a live operator for directory assistance calls instead of a computer operated system.

The United Mine Workers were successful in gaining legislative approval to be allowed to mine around plugged methane gas wells.

Labor lobbyists working with a variety of other groups were able to stop measures to enact tort reform which would have protected companies from lawsuits at the expense of workers and consumers.

Deregulation of utilities was forced into a study committee.

"The real difference this session was the team work of all AFL-CIO groups in their lobbying efforts," said Bowen.
AN INJURY TO ALL
UNFAIR TO LAID OFF EMPLOYEE

During the month of March, a group of workers were layed off from their jobs. The workers, who were members of Teamsters Local 175, Operating Engineers 132, and Laborers 1353, were outraged by this action. The layoff was unfair and unjust, and the workers felt that their rights were being violated.

The layoff was a direct result of a dispute between the workers and the company. The workers had been fighting for better working conditions and fair treatment, but the company refused to negotiate. As a result, the workers were forced to take matters into their own hands and organize a strike.

The strike was a success, and the workers were able to negotiate a better contract with the company. However, the layoff continued, and the workers decided to take their fight to the streets. They staged a picket line outside the company's offices, demanding their rights be respected.

In response to the picketing, the company threatened to lay off more workers. The workers were determined to stand up for their rights and fight back. They continued to picket, and in the end, the company was forced to negotiate with the workers.

After months of fighting, the workers were able to negotiate a fair contract with the company. The workers were able to secure their rights and were no longer subjected to unfair treatment. The strike was a victory for the workers, and they were able to stand up for their rights and win.

The workers wanted to thank everyone who supported them during this hard time. They also wanted to encourage others to stand up for their rights and fight for what they believe in. The company was forced to negotiate with the workers, and the workers were able to win their rights.

This is a story of how workers can stand up for their rights and fight back. The workers were able to secure their rights and were no longer subjected to unfair treatment. The strike was a victory for the workers, and they were able to stand up for their rights and win.

I THINK THE REAL CROOKS ARE THE ONES WHO PROFIT FROM USING ILLEGAL WORKERS.

Willard 'Bobby' Casto
Business Manager, Iron Workers Local 301
Workers in the Morgantown area are upset that a Monongalia General Hospital affiliate has hired Le Cesse Construction Company, a non-union construction company from Rochester, NY, to manage the construction of a $20 million retirement community in Morgantown.

The community will be called Village at Heritage Point.

The North Central West Virginia Building and Construction Trades Council has been meeting with Andy Hislop, vice president of Le Cesse, to discuss using local union workers and local contractors for the construction of Village at Heritage Point.

The plans for the retirement community were made available to local contractors for bidding at the Construction Employers Assn. as of the end of Feb.

Le Cesse assured the North Central Building and Construction Trades Council it only plans to use eight to 10 people from its company to act as managers and the rest of the workers will be local.

"Andy [Hislop] told us this project will require at least 200-300 people," said Rick Williams, Business Manager of the North Central Building and Construction Trades Council.

"I told him we could supply those workers easily. We are doing all we can to make sure there is no reason local workers can't be used for this project," Williams said.

The North Central Trades Council has also approached Monongalia General, since it is funding the project, about making certain local workers and contractors are used.

Mon Gen's response has been, Le Cesse has the authority to make those decisions.

On March 2, ACT ran an ad in The Dominion Post informing people in the Morgantown area of the Village at Heritage Point project.

The ad said the project would be a real boost for the community if Monongalia General would make certain that both local workers and local contractors were used for the construction.

"We are hoping Mon Gen will help influence Le Cesse in its decisions now that the people know what is going on," said Williams.

"We also hope the ad will encourage the public to let Mon Gen know they want local workers used for the project."

COLDWATER CREEK

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"The site work is separate, and it isn't fair that members of the Operating Engineers lost their fair share of work," said Lewis.

While Clayco has a design build contract for the building, almost half the project is still on the drawing board and will include the machinery purchases and installation.

An engineering firm, KSA, out of Atlanta, Ga., is in charge of the mechanical part of the project which is estimated to be approximately $15 million.

ACT will continue to watch the Coldwater project which is set to start this spring.

Pipefitter and Boilermaker members join workers at Jeld-Wen's construction site in Craigsville, Nicholas County. Wellions, Inc. employees went on strike last month for better wages and working conditions.

The National Labor Relations Board has been called in to investigate charges of unfair labor practices by Jeld-Wen. The Craigsville project received numerous economic development incentives but is importing contractors and workers from as far away as Oregon.